



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

**SB 847**

165 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106-1658

**An Act Concerning the Commission for Technology Advancement**

**Committee on Planning & Development  
March 11, 2013**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of Governor's Bill 847, **An Act Concerning the Commission for Technology Advancement**. My name is Mark Raymond, and I am the Chief Information Officer for the State of Connecticut. My bureau, the Bureau of Enterprise Systems & Technology (BEST) functions within the Department of Administrative Services.

Senate Bill 847 re-names and broadens the existing Commission for Educational Technology, establishing the Commission for Technology Advancement. The Committee adds representation for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and, separately, for the Connecticut Council for Small Towns, and expands the scope of the commission's work. The role of the commission will extend to include (1) increasing the use and availability of technology in a way that promotes efficiency in operation and increased digital literacy across the state, and (2) increasing and improving usage of high-speed, cost effective network technology to meet collaboration demands of state and local government and private industry.

Updating and expanding the membership and role of this Commission makes good sense. I believe the economic well-being of the state and future competitiveness of our citizenry on a global scale relies directly on our adoption of technology. This new Commission will have an important role in making this vision a reality.

My hope for the Commission is that it contributes in a substantive way towards raising the technology profile of the state. The results would be greater workforce competitiveness, broader and deeper skills, efficiency in our infrastructure, greater collaboration across government lines, and more opportunities for public/private partnerships that benefit the public good.

The adoption of technology across the state has been in many ways a disconnected effort. Individual groups have grown in their technology use only as far as their resources and skills have allowed. Some organizations have demonstrated amazing results embracing technology. We only need to take a look at the complete remake of ESPN from a cable company to a full emersion

technology company to see the results. However, the disparity in our ability to utilize technology certainly rivals our disparity in our education achievement. There are far too many have not's.

We need citizenry that is technology savvy, not for the sake of technology, but for the benefits it can provide. If most job opportunities are now available by applying online, how can we have a citizenry that is not prepared to seize that opportunity? If 30 and 40 year old information systems are failing, how can we not have enough qualified workers to keep these systems in proper repair?

We can also not afford to waste the precious resources that we do invest in technology. We spend far too much time recreating technical solutions from town to town, and agency to agency. The Commission on Technology Advancement would help coordinate investments in technology by identifying and encouraging the reuse of common solutions. Our education system, both public and private needs to be producing students prepared to identify and seize these opportunities. This Commission should also advise on the equitable allocation of the expenses associated with technology improvement. Nothing comes for free.

I understand there are many that still fear technology. They started a life during a time where no computers existed. Today they are battered with viruses, spam, tweets and emails. Technology, when not understood and embraced, can be dangerous. However, sharing technology innovation is not the same as sharing data about individuals. We can and should share technology in a way that keeps the data of our citizens safe and private.

The opportunity to harness the creativity, skill and resources of the state should not be passed by for lack of trying. With a vision and the public commitment, a movement to embrace technology across the state could help restore the economic vitality of Connecticut. A re-purposed Commission for Technology Advancement will enable us to work toward these important goals.